THE BOSTON GAZETTE, SAM ADAMS AND THE RESISTANCE

by

Maurice R. Cullen, Jr.

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FOREWORD

Our colonial journalism soon became, in itself, a really important literary force. It could not remain forever a mere disseminator of public gossip or a placard for the display advertisements. The instinct of critical and brave debate was strong even among those puny editors, and it kept struggling for expression. Moreover, each editor was surrounded by a coterie of friends, with active brains and a propensity to utterance; and these constituted a sort of unpaid staff of editorial contributors, who, in various forms ---letters, essays, anecdotes, epigrams, poems, lampoons -- helped to give vivacity and even literary value to the paper.

Moses C. Tyler, History of American Literature

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis in dealing with the Boston Gazette from 1760 to 1775, is threefold: It seeks to establish (1) that Boston was the colonial leader -- the focal point for the unrest and disturbance which enveloped North America, and was the driving force behind the Rebellion of 1775; (2) that Samuel Adams was the guiding power in Boston, the originator, director and main influence behind the sphere of resistance in that town, which sparked the drive for independence; (3) that his chief means of communicating his theories and ideas to a disgruntled populace was through the press, and that the Boston Gazette led this press in terms of activating and nurturing a united public opinion favorable to the cause of Adams, its chief contributor, which resulted directly in the outbreak of the American Revolution.

PURPOSE

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THE BOSTON GAZETTE AND COUNTRY JOURNAL

Containing the Freshest Advices,

Foreign and Domestick

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I

COLONIAL JOURNALISM

Printing and circulating a newspaper in colonial America was a far cry from the methods of publication and distribution of later years. The colonial journalist stuck to his press and his paper largely through sheer determination. Financial reward was not commensurate with effort and time employed, and oftentimes the discouragement that faced the publisher at every turn was enough to tax the patience of the most sturdy.

Illiteracy and poor transportation were the two prime contentions with which the newspaper publisher had to deal. He would certainly sell few, if any, of his precious journals if he lived entirely among illiterates. If transportation facilities sufficient for his needs were not at his disposal, he might just as well have closed up shop and considered another trade, for he had to get his product to the public before he could expect any return for his labor.

I

The colonial journalist seldom encountered difficulties as positive as these on such a grand scale, or for any great period of time, however. If he had, doubtless no newspapers at all would have survived. Most colonial papers failed for other reasons, e.g. unappealing style, poor print, unpopular themes, etc. The main point is that he had to contend with these two factors constantly in order to wring from his work what financial remuneration he needed to continue publication. Many people were illiterate, and means of travel were inadequate, but these hazards were avoided as much as possible. The printer had to be sure he was directing his material to "reading areas," and would have to make reservations beforehand to circulate his paper.

One major element he had to consider, but which he was powerless to pre-arrange, was the problem of the weather. In wintertime, heavy snows closed the post roads to travel, as did the spring thaw and summer rains, prohibiting extensive circulation completely. When this happened, the printer had to satisfy himself with what subscription rates he could collect locally, and hope for a better day tomorrow.

Within the print shop itself, more obstacles were in evidence than many would care to reckon with. The

manipulation of the hand press, the only manner of printing available to early Americans, was an extremely slow and tiresome process, even in the production of a single printed page. The proprietor was usually publisher and editor, and, at times, he wrote the paper in its entirety as well.

Paper had to be moistened before it could be pressed on the type faces, and after the impressions had been taken, the sheets had to be hung up to dry. In cold weather, they often became frozen solid, and had to be carefully thawed out before another page could be printed. During such trying periods, the printer would have to suspend publication, sometimes for as long as two weeks.

There was a great shortage of paper, and what was to be had was of inferior stock, as was the case with the inks.

Types were far from the best in quality, and when the faces began wearing down, the prospect of a long voyage to England for type replacements faced the printer.

All things considered, his lot was not an easy one. His work was often tiresome and seemingly endless. He set each page of type by hand, and worked the presses by hand, a sheet at a time. And if his press didn't bog down, and if his moist paper didn't freeze too often, and if the weather allowed him adequate distribution to his

readers, the colonial journalist might have a successful publication, providing he could keep his journal up with the current pace of events and competition, command good writing for his columns, and keep his health from breaking under the strain of all the other factors.

In the early days of colonial publishing, postmasters became associated with newspapers. There was sound reason for this. John Campbell sent his News-Letter by Post, without cost, as others undoubtedly did. It was one reason why it benefited printers to become postmasters, since they could arrange with post-riders to have them carry along copies of the papers while making their deliveries.[1]

In spite of the many obstacles confronting the industrious printers, they served a definite purpose, and, as time passed and populations increased, the impact of the early newspapers was felt on every quarter. The fruits of their labor were reaped in abundance.

As the turbulent years of the pre-Revolutionary era came upon them, Colonial printers rose to meet a new challenge -- the fight to win public opinion for their particular causes. Patriot and Tory went to work zealously, and the results were gratifying.

> "The well known influence of colonial newspapers in the struggle with England was equalled only by the influence which the war later had on the newspapers themselves." [2]

Unofficial war news made up approximately thirty-five percent of the content of these journals. It consisted of stories on local military activities, material taken from other papers, military reports, copies of letters from men in the army, and accounts of legislative acts dealing with military affairs. During the war, non-war news took up a total of only five percent of the total space. This five percent included death notices, medical or scientific news or reports, and general news not dealing with the war. There was little necessity for publishing local news during this period, when space for anything but war news was extremely short. News of local vintage would have been circulated from person to person before the paper went to press anyway.

Advertising, an important factor then as now, often occupied as much as forty-five percent of the paper. At times, however, a newspaper went into publication with no advertising at all, but this did not occur enough times to change the forty-five percent average.[3]

American facility for creating humor in and about a near-tragic situation has been noticeable throughout its

history, and it served a definite purpose in the colonial press. Tensions were relieved with satirical prose, humorous comments, cartoons and sayings, all to the benefit of a weary public, and a press clamoring for support.

> "Less sophisticated and polished than the output of today, the humorous product of the Revolutionary War period was just as warmly received by the reading public.... As a contemporary put it, these writers were zealous in their endeavors to entertain the public and 'brace up the nerves of our political virtue'.
>
> "In newspapers, broadsides and almanacs Revolutionary America found the anecdotes, jests, apt sayings, aphorisms, puns, paradoxes..., parodies in prose and verse, poetical satires and lively songs that lightened their war-time burdens." 4

But the fact that these newspapers were tempered to the graveness of the situation and were vastly important, not only to the townsfolk, but to the soldiers in the armies as well, cannot be denied. The great force the press had been in developing a positive and forceful public opinion in the years preceding the war, was not to be forgotten, nor quickly discarded with the acceptance of new duties. The citizens realized this, the soldiers revered it, and the leaders depended upon it.

> "General Washington in New Jersey had found it necessary to aid the printer of a newspaper near Morristown with over twenty-two hundredweight of old tent cloth and rags,

> and in addition had furnished him with a very large amount of white paper out of the army's scant supply, in order that the soldiers might have a newspaper.
>
> "Washington by this act indicated his opinion of the value of these patriotic printers to the American cause.... The reason for the official appreciation of these newspapers is found in the numerous services rendered by them to the patriot cause." 5

These newspapers were used by the army to announce to the public, official proclamations, as well as to issue the names of individuals officially proscribed because of their aid to the British, the names of deserters, (including the mention of substantial rewards for their apprehension), and to announce meeting places for various army units, among other things. 6

The Boston Gazette ran such an announcement when it stated, on behalf of a Colonel John Bailey:

> "This is to notify all officers belonging to this battalion ordered to be raised in this state, under my command, forthwith to march their men to Roxbury the place appointed for their rendezvous." 7

FOOTNOTES

1. Lee, James M., History of American Journalism, (New York: Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., 1917), p. 75

2. Thomas, Charles M., The Publication of Newspapers During the American Revolution, (Journalism Quarterly, 1932, vol. 9), p. 358

3. Ibid., p. 363

4. Pomerantz, Sydney I., Newspaper Humor In the War For Independence, (Journalism Quarterly, 1944, vol. 21), p. 311

5. Thomas, op. cit., p. 362

6. Ibid., pp. 362-3

7. The Boston Gazette, March 3, 1777

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II

THE GAZETTE

On December 21st. 1719, William Brooker, Postmaster of Boston, published the first number of a newspaper, that would one day be a prime factor in throwing the British Colonies in America into ominous unrest, internal upheaval, and ultimate revolution. This was the Boston Gazette. But in that halcyon era almost fifty years before the troubled days that were to come, Postmaster Brooker was interested only in publishing bits of world and local information of interests to but a handful of the populace - his subscribers.

On its nameplate, it bore two designs, depicting the manner in which the paper gathered its news, i.e. to the right the cut of a ship, and to the left, a cut of a postman.

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II

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James Franklin, brother of Benjamin, was its printer, and even young Ben served his apprenticeship on the Gazette.

Added to the nameplate, The Boston Gazette, were the words, "Published by Authority." A page one notice outlined the hopes of Postmaster Brooker in the identity of his journal. The notice read:

> "The publication of this paper has been in compliance with the desires of several of the merchants and others of this town, as also at the repeated instances of those people that live remote from home, who have been prevented from having their News Paper sent them by the Post, ever since Mr. Campbell was removed from being Postmaster."[1]

The Mr. Campbell referred to in this notice, was John Campbell, Brooker's predecessor as Postmaster, and founder of the Boston News-Letter. This paper was the first continuously published newspaper in America. (Benjamin Harris's Publick Occurences, published in 1690, was the first newspaper in America, but passed from the scene after only one edition.) Campbell's news was picked up in taverns, coffee houses, from ship captains and at the Sunday pulpit. In later years, the News-Letter was to join the ranks of the pro-Tory press, only to suffer a sudden demise upon the British evacuation of Boston in 1776.

A few weeks after initial publication, the Gazette passed into the hands of another postmaster, Philip Musgrave, and again in 1726, Postmaster Henry Marshall became its publisher. He retained possession of the paper until his death in 1732. John Boydell succeeded Marshall as Postmaster, and with the position went the ownership of the Gazette. He kept up publication until December, 1739, when he died.

Until October, 1741, the Gazette was printed for the heirs of Postmaster Boydell. At that time, the partnership of Kneeland and Green purchased the paper, and it was incorporated with the New England Weekly Journal. These two men held the paper until 1752, under the title of The Boston Gazette and Weekly Journal, when they dissolved their partnership.

Following this, Kneeland issued a paper titled The Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser, on January 3, 1753. Printed on the quarto form, it used the same type as the original Gazette, and claimed to be the continuation of that paper. With the advent of the Stamp Act at the close of that year, however, the paper went out of business, and was never revived.

On April 7th, 1755, the newspaper that was to be reckoned with in the days of controversy between the Royal Colonies in America, and the British government,

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On April 7th, 1755, the newspaper that was to be reckoned with in the days of controversy between the Royal Colonies in America, and the British government,

was officially ushered into being. Two Boston printers, Benjamin Edes and John Gill, formed a partnership, and, on that date, issued The Boston Gazette and Country Journal. This partnership was to survive the troubled years of the pre-Revolutionary era, and was to find dissolution only with the actual outbreak of hostilities. Edes did retain ownership after that, and carried on publication until his death in 1803. The paper went out of existence at that time.

After Lexington and Concord, and the British occupation of Boston, Edes found that his chances of survival were best away from the center of controversy. He loaded his press and paper into a boat on the Charles River, and escaped British wrath, by setting up shop at Watertown, Massachusetts, a few miles from Boston.

In the meanwhile, John Gill, the junior publisher, remained in the city. He became a virtual recluse during the time of occupation, seldom venturing beyond his front door for fear of running into difficulty with the authorities. Experience had taught Gill of the depression and heartache to be had in passing time in the gloom of a British dungeon.[2]

Edes returned to Boston with the Gazette and its equipment in 1776, following the British evacuation. But Gill, it appears, had had enough of the Boston Gazette

and the rigors of patriotic publishing, and he and Edes disbanded their working agreements completely. Gill then became associated with the Continental Journal as its publisher, closing out his days as a newspaper man. He sold his rights to the Journal in 1785, and died on August 25th of the same year.

After the departure of Gill, Benjamin Edes carried on publication of the Boston Gazette alone. As the years of Revolution slowly dragged themselves into a hectic colonial past, and as other colonial newspapers and a new class of writers came into prominence, Edes found that his beloved Gazette was fast losing ground. Its main selling point during the years of its great successes, when a circulation of 2,000 was realized, was the blazing, seditious editorial column, written with the prolific pens of Samuel Adams and his radical colleagues, which fired the hearts of patriotic Colonials, and brought factions closer together with a unification of purpose.

The citizen-subscriber was in need of prodding in those days before the fighting began, and it was to the success of the contrived unrest and zealous activity of colonial resistance against the power of Britain that this paper had been dedicated, and it kept the theme of its Cause to the forefront as a constant, living thing. However, now the long sought-after breach had been made.

The country was at war, and the Gazette was outliving its usefulness. It was no longer needed as it had been in the years when it created and carefully nurtured the fever of independence. The pages lacked their old lustre, and as competition from new journals increased, the circulation figures of the Gazette dwindled.

But Edes would not give up its publication. He died, in poverty, on December 11, 1803, at seventy-one years of age, and the Gazette went to the grave with him. The man and the journal that had served its purpose -- that had started a nation on the road to freedom, had passed into history.

Of Benjamin Edes, and his role of writer, editor and patriot, Isaiah Thomas, colonial publisher of the notorious Patriotic journal, The Massachusetts Spy, and first journalist-historian in America, stated:

> "No publisher of a newspaper felt a greater interest in the establishment of the independence of the United States than Benjamin Edes; and no newspaper was more instrumental in bringing forward this important event than the Boston Gazette." 3

In September, 1775, Peter Edes, son of the Gazette's publisher, was a prisoner of the British, under a sentence of seventy-five days, for concealing firearms in his home. He was also a member of the raiding group that staged the Boston Tea Party.

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In the stormy decade immediately preceding the Revolution, the Gazette, through its editors and its contributors, led Colonial America to the foreground of resistance -- they made it a popular theme -- by protesting the economic, social and political encroachments of the Crown of Britain upon the rights and privileges of free men. Colonials looked about for the formation of a philosophy which would be the tool to turn the tide, in their collective denunciation of tyranny. As is the case in any mass movement of resistance, they had to be led, and it was the purpose -- the avowed mission -- of the Boston Gazette to provide them with this tool. The minds of men were open, awaiting the conviction of true and devoted leadership that would direct a course of action ultimately to throw off the yoke of oppression they felt to be bearing heavily upon them.

> "If 'Spokesman for the Revolution' is a title that should be awarded to any one newspaper, the Boston Gazette should be so designated. Benjamin Edes and John Gill issued the first number under their management from their printing office on Court Street, April 7, 1755. It was the old Boston Gazette which had finally assumed a militant tone.
>
> "The Sons of Liberty at once flocked to the Gazette. Its proprietors saw, ready to hand, a group of supporters and a means of drawing public attention to the new paper." 4

The much hated Gazette (or Weekly Dung Barge as the Tories called it), was a thorn in the side of the British authority all during this period.[5] It was not satisfied to merely play the role of silent, urging instigator, but to stand defiantly on the ramparts of conviction, thundering with the righteousness of its Cause, and daring all who would usurp the power of its mission to step forward and be examined on the platform of public opinion. The Colonial Government, because of the Gazette, well learned the growing power of the printed word, and though it protested violently as a government, its members retreated individually before the searing editorials created in the minds of their simple subjects.

> "Governor Bernard (British Governor of Massachusetts) referred to the Gazette as an 'infamous weekly paper which has swarmed with Libells of the most atrocious kind'; and he tried to get a libel indictment against Edes and Gill at one time, and some action in the matter by the House of Representatives at another. The grand jury refused to indict, however, and the House replied by a notable declaration that 'the Liberty of the Press is a great Bulwark of the Liberty of the People: It is therefore the incumbent Duty of those who are constituted the Guardians of the People's Rights to defend and maintain it." [6]

The fact that the Gazette reached the monumental heights in circulation of 2,000 subscribers is an extremely important factor. Upon considering that the

literacy rate in the town of Boston itself was very low, this is a very substantial figure. The paper was in demand. Its circulation proves that. It told the people what they wanted -- what many believed they had -- to know, about themselves, about their rights, privileges, and duties, about their country and about British "tyranny." Those who could not read listened while others read. The farmers and frontiersmen, far from the rumble of discontent that shook Boston, heard of the editorials in the Gazette by word-of-mouth. The country was aware of the brewing storm, and was quite ready when the lightning struck.

> "When the dispute between Great Britain and her colonies assumed a serious aspect, this paper (the Gazette) arrested the public attention, from the part its able writers took in the cause of liberty and their country; and it gained a very extensive circulation. Edes was a warm and a firm patriot, and Gill was an honest whig." 7

More than editorials were concocted in the back shop of the Gazette. The renowned Caucus Club members, and the Sons of Liberty, among other radical groups, often congregated behind the locked doors and drawn shades of the building on Court Street, in order to hatch additional plans to undermine the strength of British rule in North America. Often such notables as Samuel and John Adams,

Joseph Warren, Josiah Quincy, Thomas Cushing, Samuel Cooper, James Otis, John Hancock, Oxbridge Thatcher, and Samuel Dexter huddled over the planning boards devising schemes of treachery and subversion, and how best to justify such to the colonial mind. Benjamin Edes was later to write that this group "constantly assembled within the confines of the Gazette office, where they 'cooked up paragraphs,' and 'worked the political engine,' as John Adams wrote; there (if tradition holds) the members of the Boston tea-party donned their Indian disguises."[8]

The British, therefore, felt the brunt of the editorial attacks, which often precipitated the more physical and destructive attacks on the part of the populace. The ruling authorities in the district fully realized the power of the press, and, after trying to reckon with the Gazette with a show of threats, and failing dismally, they turned to the task of fighting fire with fire.

> "...the Gazette continued to be the spokesman of the radicals and attained the record-breaking circulation of 2,000. 'The misfortune is,' wrote the (British) Governor in 1770, 'that seven eighths of the people read none but this infamous paper.'" [9]

> "The patriots were not alone in recognizing the importance of newspapers and in gaining the support of printers. The British officials also exerted themselves to aid journalists who remained loyal to England and to secure the support of wavering printers." 10

Editorial propensity was enlivened by the competitive systems which evolved as a result of the patriotic successes in the press of the day. The Massachusetts Gazette, the Tory counterpart to the Boston Gazette, brought an air of conflict into the literary arena, and caused the writers of the latter journal to increase diligence, sharpen points of attack, and bawl to an ever-greater bellow, its vociferous word-lashing of the political systems at hand. Competition, it seemed, brought out the best in a paper, a tradition which has survived to the present time.

> "American journalism owes much to these men and their like (Tory publishers), but they chose the side that lost and were lost with it. Their equally but not superior competitors who chose the side of the patriots were the ones who handed on the tradition." 11

At times when the storm of debate and unrest would quite willingly and easily have subsided, if given the opportunity (to the pleasure of the anxious Tories), the Gazette ranted as never before, each time outdoing its previous attempts, each time increasing in intensity the

fever pitch that threatened to feature its own destruction at the hands of an aroused government, but each time surviving its own torrent of protestation, each time winning to its side new adherents -- new writers and champions and messengers to carry its intoning communiques across the length and breadth of the land.

> "The Boston Gazette, the third paper of that name in Boston....was the especial 'pet of the patriots.' In its pages were fought the New England editorial battles for American freedom." 12

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"The Boston Gazette, the third paper of that name in Boston....was the especial 'pet of the patriots.' In its pages were fought the New England editorial battles for American freedom." 12

FOOTNOTES

1. The Boston Gazette, December 21, 1719, p. 1
2. According to testimony given by Isaiah Thomas, John Gill was imprisoned by the British for a period of twenty-nine days, for printing treason, sedition and rebellion. This took place while Edes was in exile in Watertown. Thomas, Isaiah, The History of Printing in America, (Albany, N.Y.: John Munsell, Printer, 1874), p. 136
3. Ibid., p. 139
4. Jones, Robert W., Journalism in the United States, (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1947), p. 126
5. Miller, John C., Origins of the American Revolution (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1943), p. 292
6. Mott, Frank L., American Journalism, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1947), p. 75
7. Thomas, op. cit., p. 136
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III

TEMPER OF THE TIMES

The gradual decline in the intensity of spiritual conviction that set in in eighteenth century New England, followed a general regression in morality, social virtue and philosophical ethics. Many fervent Puritans struggled to get the provinces back to the tenets of early Puritanism, feeling that this new commercialism that was fast gripping the land, sapped the life of liberty from their people. This decline brought about an abandonment, in part, of the practice of seeking solutions to political and legal problems in Scripture. The theocratic state that had been developed in Massachusetts Bay since the days of the original Puritan settlements was becoming embroiled in a miasma of political, social, and economic denunciation on the part of angered citizens, which, some felt, the religious leaders could no longer control from their pulpits. Many sought more "practical" solutions to their difficulties.[1]

III

Up until this time, the eligibility of voters in Massachusetts Bay was decided by a strict ecclesiastical process. This led to an inevitable rumble of discontent, which was to work itself into a general awakening as well as an active interest on the part of the populace to the workings of the governmental machine. As was the case in England, the promulgation of laws and the levying of taxes in New England were done with the consent of the freemen. In Massachusetts Bay, however, the situation was somewhat different. Only the freemen held office and voted in elections, only church members were freemen, and only men approved by the clergy were church members.[2]

In North America, the first settlers of Massachusetts Bay found a haven from persecution. They were quite happy to leave the stormy protests of the Anglican Church far behind, in exchange for a wilderness where they could practice and teach their doctrines without fear of molestation.[3] It was not the intention of these people to establish a free state -- a democratic union, in which one might worship his God in the manner he thought best. The Puritans sought only to set up a controlled province in which Calvinistic theology was to be the backbone of legislative principle and governmental procedure. They had no intention of allowing those holding conflicting beliefs to enter their domain with the possibility of

eventually assuming control.

As a result of this theocracy, the early settlements were small, compact units, with a parish church serving as the focal point of each, demanding responsibility for the material as well as spiritual well-being of its subjects.

But with the decline of complete religious subjection which manifested itself during the eighteenth century, (it was not a decline in religious belief, per se, but rather of faith in the invincibility of the church-government system), lawyers trained in English common law flocked to the Colonies, and found, much to their satisfaction, that they were in demand.

Intellectually, the Colonists ran on about the same level as the English. That is to say they thought as Englishmen. Because of the fact that most were of English stock, and due to the identical languages, most of the reading and thought was done along English lines. The Americans were proud men, imbued with the courage necessary in the day, to enunciate the power of their convictions. They would force any issue directed at subjecting them beyond a majority will.

In 1728, Daniel Dulany, (the elder), of Maryland wrote his popular <u>The Rights of Inhabitants of Maryland to the Benefit of the English Laws</u>[4], in which he

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popularized the theory that both legal and constitutional history, as well as natural law, provided that Americans were entitled to the same freedom as English citizens. Fifty years hence, this very principle jolted North America into revolution.

The economic side of colonial growth ran far ahead of the intellectual. The terrifying superstitions that gripped the hearts of the Puritans, plus the image of an all-vengeful God Who would cast fire and brimstone down on them for the slightest transgression, was held constantly before them. The fear of Satan and his diabolical devises designed specifically to ensnare their very bodies and souls sent them shuddering into intellectual hiding. The flames of old superstitions were kindled with the added oddities offered by the Indians and Negroes. Forests became the hiding places for monsters after dark, people became witches and were burned alive, while sin was the most horrifying and unforgiveable act imaginable, and if made public, the unfortunate infidel was dealt with publicly.[5]

Economically, the people labored under the practices of mercantilism, which left them little incentive. For them, much of the luxury that was the promise of the New World, had to be sought out.

> "...there were few cheap factory-made articles to be had in any market. Means of transportation in America were so poor that most communities were isolated, money was exceedingly scarce, purchase through barter was cumbersome, the settlers were surrounded by raw materials of nearly every sort, and necessity proved the mother of invention in using them." [6]

Parliament directed most of its colonial legislation at intensifying the mercantile program. Four objectives of this system were: (1) to encourage colonial shipping, (2) to protect colonial farmers, (3) to support and increase colonial industries, (4) to develop and keep a plentiful supply of hard money. These were intended, primarily, to gird the British Empire for any future wars. [7]

> "The colonials were to buy more from the mother country than they sold to her: and the balances were to be paid for in bullion.... As far as the British mainland colonies in America were concerned, mercantilism by the eighteenth century had become a repressive device. To release the colonies from this leading string, which had become a fetter, became in effect the program of the American Revolution." [8]

Mercantilism favored the merchants and landowners of both America and England, but little was done to allow for the financial efforts of the remainder of the populace. For the common man -- the worker who was to put into

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practice the systems of labor and reward which would aid the wealthy only, life under this practice proved to be burdensome.

> "The medieval world sought to attain plenty; hence it frowned on the export of goods while it tried to encourage imports. The mercantile world spoke slurringly of what it referred to as 'a dead stock called plenty': hence it reversed the process and sought to stimulate the exports of goods and limit imports. Mercantile states, therefore, favored an increase in population, were not opposed to child labor, kept wages down (to give home producers a competitive advantage in foreign markets), and exploited the native populations of the colonial possessions overseas." 9

Early in the eighteenth century, the colonists tired of the oppressive restrictions of mercantilism. They voiced disapproval at first in shallow grumblings, but which grew in intensity to outright shouts of defiance for British economic tyranny.

> "The reaction against mercantilism spread rapidly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries....Taking a broad view of the system which developed under the influence of the doctrine of laissez faire, we note that it is founded on three major principles: (1) personal liberty, (2) private property, and (3) individual initiative and control of enterprise." 10

The central government of the British Empire was set up as follows: Occupying first place in line of authority and responsibility, the sole dispenser of all ungranted

lands, was the King. Next came the Privy Council, which, acting for the king, reviewed colonial laws, heard appeals from colonial courts, and gave instructions to royal governors. After this group, came the Executive Departments, including Treasury Officers, the Admiralty, the Secretary of State, the War Office, the Law Office, and the Bishop of London, who had ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Church of England in America. The Parliament and the Board of Trade came last, in that order. Parliament, controlled by English businessmen, passed legislation which would favor business.

To this bureaucratic system which catered to the complexities of classes and social structures, came the wails and bemoanings of an aroused colonial world.[11] Through this body politic, the King of England methodically drew the life out of the almost-rebellious colonists for as long as opportunity would allow. This he did by review and disallowance of colonial acts, by regulating currency, by extension of the right of appeal from the colonial courts to the Privy Council, by sending additional royal officials to America, and by changing the status of the colonies to Royal Colonies.

The internal affairs that had gripped England for many years brought about an almost careless attitude on

the part of the British government toward the rearing of her colonial child. The colonies had been left to themselves, building, saving and fighting in order to forge decent lives and surroundings for themselves from the wilderness of North America. Then, when the time arrived that England was free from her woes from within, she turned suddenly-interested eyes to the west. The original breach which constantly widened until the outbreak of the War for American Independence, can be said to have been forged at about the end of the Seven Years' War.[12]

Many Americans felt that Britain didn't want to be bothered with the economic difficulties of the colonies during their struggles for existence. But as soon as they became self-sufficient, and a wealthy trading center, these men argued that England wanted to reap the rewards of their labor. This, they warned, they would never allow.

America felt that it had served its part well in the French and Indian War, (the American counterpart to Europe's Seven Years' War), and that it was not responsible to help fill the British coffers, emptied by the years of fighting. While Englishmen argued that they should not be taxed to take care of the colonies, the colonies declared that, since they had given freely of

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their men for the fighting, and having supplied them with their own food and allowances, they had already shared financially in the war to drive the French from the New World. That was sufficient!

> "The war itself laid the foundation for this conflict (between Britain and America). During the war the Colonies levied and equipped about twenty-five thousand troops... The Colonies had good reason, therefore, to feel that they had done their full part in expelling the French from North America: and...that for the future... they could easily defend themselves without any British aid at all. The general effect of the French and Indian War upon the Colonies was one of emancipation -- it gave them a sense of power and independence such as they had never known before." 13

> "The feeling of intercolonial solidarity was strengthened by the rapid growth of the Colonies in wealth and population.... Furthermore, on account of this increase in population, the Colonies were every year becoming more important to England as markets for her manufactured goods. Thus at the moment when the Colonies were beginning to feel strong enough to get along without the protection of Great Britain, they were also coming to feel in some measure that Great Britain could not very well get along without them." 14

Colonial intellectual life was stimulated by an ever-increasing number of periodicals. Most of these were newspapers and almanacs. Newspapers in those days grew about as much as the greatly illiterate population would allow. Altogether too few well-educated and cultured individuals existed in this society, but the ones

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who did read avidly of the almanacs and tabloid journals that were to be had. Much of the news was clipped from European papers, and was usually run entirely in conformance with the views of the editors.

At the outbreak of the Revolution, there were thirty-seven newspapers in existence throughout the colonies. Most of them were anti-British, a disgruntled faction created largely by the Stamp Act, which advocated taxing newspapers.

Though magazines went into publication from time to time, they found it difficult to satisfactorily compete with the popularity of the newspapers. The latter often included in its pages, reprints of literary works, thereby crippling the magazine's chief purpose for existing. Most of the early magazines seldom outlived a few issues.

Shortly after the close of the French and Indian War, the British government set itself in earnest about the business of taking over complete control of the North American colonies. Laws allowing currency regulation and additional troops to be garrisoned in the provinces were badly timed. These sections were undergoing an economic depression, and money was scarce. These factors, which added to the political unrest already in existence, created a greater degree of ill feeling amongst Americans for their British masters.

A series of laws regulating colonial economy, trading, etc., followed. Among these was the Sugar Act of 1764, which was intended as a replacement for the old Molasses Act, (which had been ignored by the colonists), with every intention of seeing that it was carried out. Also passed in 1764 was the Currency Act, which prohibited the further issuance of legal bills of credit. Most of the colonial opposition to this legislation came from rural debtors, and this largely because they had been circulating such bills of credit for many years, reaping in additional profits from the usual inflationary effect.

Perhaps the best known of this series of acts, was the infamous Stamp Act, which became law in 1765. While such taxes had been common in England, they were not in America, and Americans were infuriated at the prospects outlined in the Act. Actually, the taxes were light, often less than in England. The chief opposition to this novelty was that the colonists had not been consulted before the bill became law.

For the purpose of transferring additional troops to the colonies, Parliament adopted the Quartering Act in 1765. It stipulated that troops would be housed in taverns, inns, private homes, barns, etc., providing there was not sufficient barracks space on military reservations. The quarters were to be rented and paid

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for along with rations, etc., with moneys taken from colonial treasuries.

As was aforementioned, the Stamp Tax was the one that encountered most resistance. The arguments of James Otis on the Writs of Assistance were explored in a pamphlet, The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved. The argument here was that "a law to tax men without their consent is unreasonable; that which is unreasonable is unconstitutional; that which is unconstitutional is void." This later was to become a leading principle in American constitutional theory. Otis did much to arouse the people, and keep alive their demand for equal representation in Parliament. "Right, reason and the spirit of a free constitution," he said, "require that the representative of the whole people should be as equal as possible."[15]

> "The right of Parliament to tax the Colonies in fact involved the right to abolish colonial self-government; and fundamentally, therefore, the Colonies were contending for the right of self-government.
> "In defense of this right, the colonists resisted the Stamp Tax."[16]

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Finally, with the repeal of the Stamp Act in March of 1776, the Crown passed the Declaratory Act, which stated that the government could and would bind the Colonies in all future legislation.[18]

In 1767, came a new British Cabinet into being, with George Grenville at the reins, and the advent of the hated Townshend Acts. Though these acts succeeded financially, they served only to give fuel to a fire of political hate which the colonial radicals worked at blowing into an uncontrollable blaze. The purpose of this series was, primarily, threefold: (1) to enforce the acts of trade, (2) to raise revenue for governing the colonies, and (3) to provide finances for the salaries of Royal officials in the Colonies.[19]

One of these Acts, the Duty Act, reduced the tax on molasses, but brought in new taxes on tea, paper, paint, glass and lead. It authorized a "writs of assistance" program as well. This particular bit of legislation sent many stout-hearted Loyalists racing into the Patriot camp.

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> "It seems to be generally agreed, that every man who is taxed has a right to be present in person or by his own representative, in the body that taxes him; or as Lord Camden has

expressed it, that 'taxation and representation are inseperable.' A man's property is the fruit of his industry; and if it may be taken from him under any pretence whatever, at the will of another, he cannot be said to be free, for he labors like a bond slave, not for himself, but for another. Or supposing his property comes by inheritance or free gift, it is absolutely his own, and it cannot rightly be taken from him without his consent."[20]

Colonial resistance to these Acts precipitated the sudden storms of periodic violence that broke out in the streets of Boston, and climaxed with the Boston "Massacre" on March 5, 1770. British soldiers were attacked by mobs in streets and alleyways. Tea was dumped from ships into Boston Harbor. Colonial merchants invoked non-importation agreements during the period of 1768-1770. These difficulties paved the way for the final blow in united British-American affairs, the Intolerable Acts, the Crown's answer to Colonial resistance.

One of these was the Massachusetts Government Act, which assigned General Gage to Boston as military governor of the province. It also curtailed the authority of the Town Meeting, and brought even more troops into the city.

This latter group of laws did more to unite the Colonies of America than perhaps anything else to date. They left the way open for the gathering of the First Continental Congress, summoned at the dissolution of the Virginia House of Burgesses, in sympathy from that group, for the plight of the Bostonians, after passage of the Boston Port Bill. This Congress readied the country for war. The hour was upon them!

The radicals who had fought their way to the forefront through the American press, now worked with renewed spirit. Something for which they might have hoped only in silence as they hurried to secret meetings off darkened Boston streets was about to be. America was prepared to declare her independence.

> "...there was no contemporary doubt as to which colony began and pushed steadily forward the revolutionary movement. The statesmen and writers, the army of pamphleteers, the editors of newspapers, and the historians of England and France, all alike proclaimed Massachusetts as the head and front of the offending, and Boston as the head and front of Massachusetts. 'This province began it -- I might say this town,' wrote General Gage in bitterness of soul...." 21

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FOOTNOTES

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IV

" THE GRAND INCENDIARY "

Samuel Adams, the illustrious child of Puritan New England, and Father of the Rebellion that shook an Empire, was born, of English stock, in Boston, Massachusetts Bay, on September 16, 1722. His family, educated and prosperous, had long been in America, and were pious disciples of Winthrop, Mather and the Puritan Church.

Young Adams proved to be an accomplished scholar. Entering Harvard College at the age of fourteen, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors in 1740. While an undergraduate, he, with the aid of his allowance, wrote and published a pamphlet called Englishmen's Rights. Even at that early hour, the spark of liberty and freedom as well as a deep and devoted interest in the welfare of the common man, was noticeable. In 1743, he received his Master's degree, and jolted the commencement crowds with his near-treasonable Master's dissertation, entitled: Whether it be lawful to resist the Supreme Magistrate,

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Young Adams proved to be an accomplished scholar. Entering Harvard College at the age of fourteen, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors in 1740. While an undergraduate, he, with the aid of his allowance, wrote and published a pamphlet called <u>Englishmen's Rights</u>. Even at that early hour, the spark of liberty and freedom as well as a deep and devoted interest in the welfare of the common man, was noticeable. In 1743, he received his Master's degree, and jolted the commencement crowds with his near-treasonable Master's dissertation, entitled:

<u>Whether it be lawful to resist the Supreme Magistrate.</u>

if the Commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved.[1] The audience was electrified, but since radical views were often expounded by idealistic graduates, they remained otherwise calmly composed throughout the reading.

In succession, Adams later studied for the ministry, and for a law career, but relinquished his claims to each after a short period of preparation.

Following his entrance into the mercantile world, he found that his interests were becoming stagnated with the sharp ring of figures and the dust of old ledgers. Young as he was, he felt to be out of sorts as a business-man. An early business venture, financed by his father, failed, and at long last, Adams resigned himself to working in his father's malt-house. In 1748, his father died, and Sam was left with control of the business.

On October 17, 1749 there occurred the first appreciable change in the life of Sam Adams. He married Elizabeth Checkley, the daughter of a minister. She died eight years later, leaving him with two children.

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though nothing ever came of the charges.

In 1748, Adams became awakened to a power new to him -- where he could direct his course of energy and political interest to a zealous boil -- the press. He founded the first newspaper in Boston dedicated to a political faction. This was the Independent Advertiser. Adams saw that the best manner of communicating his theories, ideas and criticisms of government to the public, was through the newspapers, and from that time until after independence was established in North America, he utilized this medium to the utmost.

One of his first attempts with the Advertiser was to bring the colonies back to the teachings of staunch Puritanism,[2] from which it had departed in the mid-eighteenth century. This was always a major ambition with him, and he strove all his life to achieve it.

> "The Public Advertiser, whose first number was published in Boston, January 1, 1748..., became the organ of the first political association in the colonies for the promulgation of those principles which led in after years to the American Revolution."[3]

And, again in the Advertiser in 1749, he jolted the ruling systems of the province by bitterly attacking upper-classes who monopolized the government. This proved to be a bone of contention with him for some years.[4]

But almost twenty years were to pass before he stepped out of this minor role, to assume the character of patriot, orator and journalist, that was to circulate his name throughout the world.

Adams's first denunciation of what he felt were the "tyrannical" attitude and practices of the British Parliament came on May 24, 1764, in a letter to the Boston Town Meeting. In this paper he stated:

> "If taxes are laid upon us in any shape without our having a legal representation where they are laid, are we not reduced from the Character of Free Subjects to the miserable state of tributary slaves ? We claim British rights not by charter only! We are born to them."

This document also contained the first suggestion for colonial union, of which Adams was one of the original promoters.

On December 6, 1764, he married for the second time. His bride on this occasion was Elizabeth Wells, who proved to be a great aid and comfort to Adams. Though his income was meager, the new Mrs. Adams worked minor miracles and always managed to keep a comfortable home, with large portions of encouragement available for her husband and his work at all times.

One of the early accomplishments of Samuel Adams was his drafting of the Fourteen Resolves of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, on October 29, 1765, in answer to the passage of the Stamp Act by Parliament. Although only recently elected to the General Court, Adams drafted the Resolves with the air of a veteran legislator. Some of the Resolves included the following highlights:

> Since the rights and privileges of the colonists, as derived from British constitutional law, as well as the Charter of Massachusetts Bay, are in question, the following is resolved: (1) the laws of God and of Nature and the common rights of mankind, allow certain rights for the citizens; (2) the inhabitants of the colonies are unalienably entitled to these rights, and no social law consistent with the Laws of God and of Nature can divest them of these rights; (3) no man can justly take that which belongs to another without his consent; (4) the Magna Charter and later acts of Parliament have assured these rights to the people; (5) Americans are entitled to the same rights as Englishmen; (8) since our ancestors settled the colonies

at their own expense, and since their successors have declared allegiance to the king, these rights do belong to the colonists; (9) since Americans pay for and support their government in America without the help of British taxes, they should not be called upon to help pay the expenses of government in England; (10) Americans are not represented in Parliament; (12) all legislation and taxes levied for this province by any body other than the province's General Assembly are infringements upon these rights, and render void the colonial charter; (13) the extension of power of the Admiralty Courts in the province is a violent infraction of the right of trial by jury.

Adams had long voiced his feelings about Parliamentary legislation for the colonies. He believed that colonists owed allegiance to the King of England, but not to Parliament, since it was strictly an English body and had no right to pass laws, etc., for anyone but English citizens.

The man later to be tabbed "The Grand Incendiary" had begun his work -- had planted the seed that was to blossom into a search for liberty, freedom and ultimate

independence. Samuel Adams was coming into his own as a leader of powerful factions, and denunciator of "foreign" interference and oppression. As John Adams later put it:

> "Without the character of Samuel Adams, the true history of the American Revolution can never be written. For fifty years, his pen, his tongue, his activity, were constantly exerted for his country without fee or reward." 5

This idea of oppression at the hands of the British government was a factor that Adams early recognized to be all-powerful. Certainly if the people felt that they were being oppressed by the laws and stringencies of what they termed to be a "foreign power", then they weren't very happy with their lot. Where unhappiness or discontent was the keynote, Adams artfully spied the makings of rebellion against the systems which had created such grumblings. If he could make these individuals dwell on whatever disturbed them -- if they would constantly exercise an introspective curiosity into the factors which forced this note of misery into their lives, then a mighty tool for mediation could be wielded before British authority. Organization, as such, was not the major problem, for a sort of "brotherhood in misery" was beginning to evolve from the effects of the times, and as conviction of definite oppression swelled within the

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heart of each, membership in the "brotherhood" would multiply rapidly.

The problem facing Adams and his fellow radicals was one of keeping up this feeling of depression, suspense and distrust of things British, which would eventually work itself into a general pattern of collective denunciation. This, then, was the aim of Samuel Adams. This he hoped to accomplish through the press -- more specifically, the Boston Gazette.

> "In the American Revolution, Samuel Adams was one of the most important...personal agents (influencing public opinion). He and his associates devoted themselves to the task of convincing the people that they were oppressed, and in organizing them so that they could give point to their feelings. The Revolution was not a spontaneous movement, the result of a genuine popular uprising, but rather the product of something not so very different from agitation and propaganda." 6

This one newspaper, the Boston Gazette, was, in the days ahead, to do more than any other instrument of communication to unite the populace in a common purpose, and was to feature the whiplashing words of the radicals in bringing to the fore the contumacious debate that had already begun.

> "...there is no doubt that Sam Adams was the leader of the group in number of contributions and in direction of editorial policy (of the Gazette). Through his writings in the Gazette

and his talents for political organization and propaganda. Adams doubtless did more than any other individual to bring independence forward as a practical measure.

"Adams's political philosophy, as expounded in the Gazette was based on John Locke's doctrine of the political compact." 7

The worry and anxiety which the Gazette parceled for the enemies of the Patriots was early registered. The rulers in America, as well as the Tories in general, attempted to steer the public mind away from the entreaties of this journal. They threatened and pleaded, all to no avail. The Gazette was the spokesman for the radicals circulating their ideas on rights, liberty, taxation and laws, and the people came to feel they needed it.

"How this group of writers was regarded by prominent Loyalists, is shown in a letter written in 1769 by Andrew Oliver, Governor Hutchinson's brother-in-law...in which he said, 'If there be no way to take off the original incendiaries (by sending them to England, as was proposed, to be tried for treason) they will still continue to instil poison into the minds of the people through the vehicle of the Boston Gazette." 8

"...George Grenville (Prime Minister) rose in the House of Commons and, waving a copy of the Boston Gazette above his head, told the members that Americans were being prepared for rebellion by means of subversive newspapers..." 9

"Through the Boston Gazette, which gained the reputation of being the 'most factious paper in America,' the Boston patriots 'Spit their Venom' at the governor and Thomas Hutchinson." 10

All through his life, Samuel Adams clung tenaciously to the doctrines of Puritanism. So strong was he in that regard that at the First Continental Congress difficulty arose from the Episcopalians and Anglicans from the South, and from the Quakers of Pennsylvania. The religious convictions of Adams, so manifest throughout his political career, were not such as to allow room for believers other than those who embraced the doctrines of Calvin. His reputation was well known to the other delegates at the Congress, and Adams found it necessary to give way on several points which he considered to be most necessary as a result.

These religious views often became entangled with the explosive side of the man who was out to lead the country into a "new" type of liberty, and, since these views monopolized, and to a great extent helped create much of his thinking, are worthy of some mention here.

An example of this appeared in the Boston Gazette amidst the difficulties and debate over the right of British rule. It depicts how deeply convinced Adams was that, religiously, Puritanism was to be the sole procreator and savior of American liberty.

"While it is grown fashionable, for men of ingenuity and public spirit, with a noble ardour, to warn us against a tame submission to the iron rods; and Liberty, Liberty is the cry: I confess I am surprised to find that so little attention is given to the danger we are in, of the utter loss of these religious rights....

"To say the truth, I have from long observation been apprehensive, that what we have above everything else to fear is POPERY.... There is a variety of ways in which POPERY, the idolatry of the christians, may be introduced into America.... Yet, my dear countrymen -- suffer me not at this time...to warn you all, as you value your precious civil liberty, and everything you can call dear to you, to be upon your guard against POPERY.... I am determined that if any others shall be roused by my future lucubrations to oppose POPERY, as I trust and hope they will, they shall have the same notice taken of them in another paper."

This article was signed "A Puritan." 11

Another such article appearing in the Gazette a week later continued the discussion which Adams found to be so

much of a problem, and which, as has been stated, he found to be equally as dangerous throughout his lifetime.

> "...I do so still (believe) that much more is to be dreaded from the growth of POPERY in America, than from the Stamp-Acts or any other acts destructive of men's civil rights: Nay, I could not help fancying that the Stamp Act itself was contrived with a design only to inure the people to the habit of contemplating themselves, as the slaves of men; and the transition thence to a subjection to Satan, is mighty easy....
>
> "I mounted my horse and proceeded to Salem, which town I had heard...had formerly been visited by a romish priest, who had used all his arts and tricks to draw them from their adherence to the protestant cause...." 12

This, too, was signed "A Puritan." More of this will be considered further on, in dealing with Adams's reactions to the Boston Massacre of 1770, where his views on religion played an important part in weighing testimony which dealt with the incident.

The radical writers who flocked to the doors of the Gazette, when publishers Edes and Gill opened their pages to them, caused a furor of indignation from Tory quarters,

at the prospects and charges outlined in their articles. The Tories felt that the government was supreme, and was not to be bandied about in the radical press. Attempts were made to stop the publication of the paper, but public sentiment proved too great an obstacle for these officials to hurdle.[13]

> "So strong was Loyalist hatred against these writers and publishers by 1774 that some Loyalists distributed a letter in the British camp at Boston to incite the troops to put them 'to the sword, destroy their houses and plunder their effects,' declaring that 'it is just that they should be the first victims of the mischiefs they have brought upon us.'" [14]

When Governor Bernard assumed office in Boston, he was practically met at his door by Samuel Adams and James Otis, who sought to "set the man straight" as to what went on in the province. They warned that unless he joined forces with them, they would drive him from the colony, as they had done to other governors, boasting that the last three to go did so entirely because of the efforts of these two radicals. They made it quite clear that unless he joined forces with their party, he would "find arrayed against him some of the best politicians in the colony, particularly that formidable Boston politician and newspaper writer, Sam Adams." 15

> "Although the royal governors lamented that the Whig newspapers were 'crammed with Treason,' and dreaded the publication day of the Boston Gazette...they were unable to put a stop to these effusions." 16

Governor Bernard came to know much about the fiery Mr. Adams, and long remembered him and his prolific pen, "every dip" of which "stung like a horned snake." 17

> "...for thirty long years...it was almost a work of preparation, ripening only by slow progress and at an almost imperceptible pace into organization leading ever...to that actual resistance from which there could be no retreat, and whose successful issue he (Adams) never doubted. These were the most remarkable and eventful years of his life, and of the life of any American save Washington yet born. Indeed every hour of revolutionary research makes it more and more apparent that had there been no Samuel Adams, there had been no Washington. The Father of the Revolution must needs precede the Father of his country." 18

With the passage of the Stamp Tax in 1765, Samuel Adams saw his opportunity. All about him, he heard the grumblings of discontent. He heard the people murmur unhappily that it was not their duty to pay for the cost of the French and Indian War, since they had already paid in men, blood, and finances. The demands of the radicals, as was pointed out in another chapter, were not so much centered on the tax itself, as they were on the method of levying such taxes -- without just representation in

Parliament, for the very people who were to be taxed. Adams immediately flourished his magic pen over the pages of the Gazette, and assisted the denunciatory murmurs with his editorials on the subject. In his Instructions to the General Court, published in the Gazette on September 23, 1765, Adams wrote:

> "At a time when the British American subjects are every where loudly complaining of arbitrary and unconstitutional innovations, the Town of Boston cannot any longer remain silent without just imputation of inexcusable neglect....
>
> "...we are more particularly alarmed and astonished at the Act, called the Stamp Act, by which a very grievous and we apprehend unconstitutional Tax is to be laid upon the Colony.
>
> "By the Royal Charter granted to our ancestors, the power of making laws for our internal government and of levying taxes, is vested in the General Assembly: And by the same Charter the inhabitants of this province are entitled to all the rights and privileges of natural free born subjects of Great Britain: The most essential rights of British subjects are those of being represented in the same body which

exercises the power of levying taxes upon them, and of having their property tryed by juries.... It is certain that we were in no sense represented in the Parliament of Great Britain when this Act of Taxation was made.... It follows, that at once, it annihilates the most valuable privileges of our Charter, deprives us of the most essential rights of Britons, and greatly weakens the best security of our lives, liberty and estates; which may hereafter be at the disposal of judges, who may be strangers to us and perhaps malicious, mercenary, corrupt and oppressive.

"...Moreover this Act, if carried into execution, will become a further grievance to us, as it will afford a precedent for the Parliament to tax us, in all future time, and in such ways and measures, as they shall judge meet without our consent...."[19]

Under the twenty-five pseudonyms used by this man in his journalistic assaults, he brought before the public, the very arguments that they felt surging through their more generalized resentment, only now in unified form. How the people felt about these encroachments upon their

liberty is not difficult to ascertain -- it is evident in the hurried fashion in which they clustered about Adams and his radical faction, clamoring for more and more of the prosaic sinew that seemed to be constantly lashing out at the administration, forcing vital issues that would never have been forced -- that would never have been real issues -- if not for the fact that they were paraded before the public in the newspapers. The workings of government, whenever conflicting with the principles of the masses -- more specifically, the radicals -- were bandied about in such fashion as to make the fearful politicos cringe. Without proper leadership, this would not have taken place, for Adams had been treated with elaborate enticements as well as powerful threats in an effort to get him to cease his rantings, and Adams was the leader. Of that there is no doubt.

> "No one but himself had raised him (Adams) to eminence. English ministers had sought for evidence to warrant his arrest for treason, they had tried to cajole him, they had laid wealth and pension and places at his feet, they had failed to buy or intimidate, and finally they had him proscribed. They had named him 'the arch rebel,' 'the chief incendiary,' 'the instar omnium,' and they were troubled by no doubts when they did so....England regarded Samuel Adams as the beginner, leader, and organizer of the revolutionary movement which culminated in war and independence, and the Americans of that day agreed with her." 20

Adams interpreted the repeal of the Stamp Act almost as a sign of weakness, and immediately felt that if the government would give place here, they would on other issues as well. Almost as soon as the ink was dried on the repeal, he and his group commenced pushing forward, in an attempt to get more concessions -- greater freedom for his colonies. The belief in the infallibility of his philosophy, and his great trust in the common man were enough to warrant any actions he undertook on the part of America, and he worked tirelessly to perfect a code of resistance for all, even over the doubts of his closest friends.

> "Samuel Adams was among the first...to urge independence. In the Boston Gazette of September 27 and October 23, 1773, he urged that 'a congress of American states be assembled as soon as possible,' and that the colonies 'form an Independent State, an American Commonwealth.' This was one of the first direct suggestions for separation from England, and union to form a nation.
>
> "Through the period of excitement preceding the overt acts that started the fighting, the Boston Gazette fearlessly told the public the news." 21

While the Stamp Tax was in vogue, one of the chief complaints uttered by the public was that it overtaxed what meager incomes they now possessed. Many even felt that the tax would bankrupt the country. An economic depression engulfed the land, and people suffered from a

keen anxiety as to where the additional funds would come from. Adams used this very effectively as a major tool against local authorities, as well as Parliamentary action in general.[22]

With the tax laws that later accompanied the hated Townshend Acts, Adams used a similar argument. But this time, so many governmental acts had been passed for the colonies, and in such rapid succession, that he had a new weapon with which to flail the administration. He laced the Commissioners of the Customs as being "the greatest political curses that could have been sent amongst us,"[23] and warned the citizenry that if they did not resist, these new taxes would prove to be only a sample of what was to come.

In the fall of 1768, Governor Bernard brought additional troops into the city, to quell any uprisings that might present themselves, courtesy of Mr. Sam Adams and colleagues. The troops disembarked from their ships, and marched through Boston to their quarters at such places as Faneuil Hall and the Common. The people watched with bitterness as they poured into the town, but not a hand was raised to stop them.[24] But Adams knew well what hour offered the best time for his attack. As the troops set up camp on the Common, they placed their cannon at strategic positions, and sentries lined the green,

challenging with musket and bayonet everyone who passed. This, Adams knew well, humiliated the people of Boston, and he waited eagerly for the kettle of renewed resentment to boil.

> "Then came the British regiments, and a fierce discussion opened in regard to their presence in the town.... The people bitterly resented the presence of the soldiers, and the leaders, headed by Adams, stimulated the popular hostility." 25

Adams had also pre-arranged for the discomfiture of the "visiting" soldiers.

> "British troops had marched into Boston unopposed, but Sam Adams did not propose to allow them to enjoy long the hospitality of the Puritan metropolis. Rather than provide barracks for the soldiers, Adams was resolved to let them freeze in their encampment on the Boston Common. Whigs were told to show redcoats the same courtesy they did 'Serpents and Panthers' ...." 26

Of this "military occupation" Adams wrote and said much. As a result of the presence of the troops, frequent scuffles between citizens and soldiers took place. Of the occupation, Adams wrote in the Gazette:

> "...when these gentlemen's attendants (British soldiers) take upon them to call upon every one who passes by, to know Who comes there...is, I take it to be in the highest

degree impertinent, unless they can show a legal authority for so doing....

"What right have their officers to give them such orders in this town ? It is a question which appears to me to be of present importance, and ought to be decided.... I am informed that not less than nine gentlemen of character, some of them of the first families in this province, were stopped and put under guard the other evening, for refusing to submit to this military novelty....

"Are we a garrisoned town or are we not ? If we are, let us know by whose authority and by whose influence we are made so: If not, and I take it for granted that we are not, let us then assert and maintain the honor -- the dignity of free citizens and place the military where all other men are, and where they always ought and always will be placed in every free country, at the foot of the common law of the land....

"Is Boston disfranchised ? When, and for what crime was it done....

"...are the inhabitants of this town still to be affronted....by soldiers armed with muskets and fixed bayonets ? Are these the blessings of

> government ? Will the spirits of people as yet unsubdued by tyranny, unawed by the menaces of arbitrary power, submit to be governed by military force ? No, let us rouse our attention to the common law, which is our birthright....our great security against all kinds of insult and oppression... The law...when rightly used is the curb and the terror of the haughtiest tyrant.... The boldest transgressor will... tremble..., and the orderly and peaceable inhabitants will be restored to the rights, privileges and immunities of free subjects."[27]

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In subsequent editorials in the Gazette, Adams stated that "it is a very improbable supposition, that any people can long remain free, with a strong military power in the very heart of their country," unless the military organizations in question are "under the direction of the people." He lashed out at any individual who be "either a knave or a fool" in daring to testify that America is a land of "treason and rebellion" because the people fight for "their constitutional and natural rights," and lastly warning those in power, that while large armies are sufficient to frighten women and children

and weak men in other countries, they "will never awe a sensible American tamely to surrender his liberty."[28]

This was not the last the Tories were to hear about the injustice of subjecting a populace to the rigors of military rule[29] any more than it was the last palpitation from the heart of Sam Adams.

The coming of the troops brought about more resentment and suspense between the two factions than ever before. As Adams pointed out in his articles in the Gazette, and it was the idea he gave to the people who had not already figured it out for themselves, the presence of armed troops quartered in the heart of the town stifled the republic under which they had lived since the inception of social and political order in America, and made them subjects of armed might. The radicals were watched carefully, and rumors ran rampant as to what this group of Patriots would do next to stab at British authority. One rumor circulated that Adams and the Sons of Liberty intended to storm Castle William by surprise, imprison the garrison, and man the Fort with members of the organization.[30] But such as this seemingly was not within the schemes of Adams. He would much rather let the authorities make the mistakes upon which he would leap for purposes of complete exploitation before the eyes of the province.

When the spirits of his party seemed to drop below the fiery level of activity and interest which Adams had set for it, he oftentimes staged mammoth rallies, parades, fireworks and the like in order to rekindle their zeal. He fully realized the great potential that was stored in the makings of emotional stimulation -- far more than all the orations on constitutional rights that one could muster.[31]

Actually, Governor Bernard, in 1767, enjoyed to the utmost, a sudden decline in the power of the Whig Party in Massachusetts Bay. He felt that at last he was free from the threats and incantations of the radicals.[32] But the slight regression did not last for too long a period, and much to the discomfiture of the administration, the Whigs managed a comeback which restored them to power.

The radical groups controlled by Adams constantly strove to keep up the interest of the people in their oppressive plights, as well as to land hard on the authority of the Tories whenever opportunity allowed. Such organizations as the Caucus Club, the Sons of Liberty, and the Loyall Nine, worked feverishly under the direction of Adams, Hancock, Otis, et al., to undermine the current rulers. Their main interest lay in the preservation of popular loyalty from which they derived their effectiveness.

> "Whenever a riot or meeting of the citizens at Liberty Tree was planned, it was the 'Loyall Nine' who placarded the town with notices during the small hours of the night, urging the townspeople to be on hand for the event. They kept their identity secret and wished it to be believed that the mobs they set in motion were spontaneous outbreaks of violence from the 'lower sort.' But it will be seen that Boston was controlled by a 'trained mob' and that Sam Adams was its keeper." 33

In 1770 the difficulties presented as a result of the presence of the two regiments which Bernard had brought into the town of Boston came to a head. Scuffles between citizens and soldiers took place, but authorities, for the most part were content to feel that such was the price of military occupation. However, on March 5, 1770, there took place an "uprising" which was to be one of the mightiest weapons Sam Adams had ever come by -- the Boston Massacre.

A mob of citizens had assembled and attacked a sentry at the Customs House. This act was interpreted as a robbery attempt on the King's Chest in which customs revenue was stored. Reinforcements were rushed to the scene, and Captain Preston, in charge of the troops, sought to disperse the mob. But the townspeople were "striking their Clubs and Bludgeons one against another and calling out, come on you Rascals, you bloody-backs, you Lobster Scoundrels; fire if you dare, G--d damn you,

fire and be damned, we know you dare not."[34] In the excitement that followed, an anxious soldier discharged his musket, and the rest followed suit. When the streets were cleared, three dead and eight wounded lay, stretched out before the British soldiers. (One of the dead was Crispus Attucks, a negroe, one of the comparatively few in the province at the time.)

Captain Preston and his soldiers were brought to trial, charged with the murder of the five dead citizens, (two had died of wounds between the time of the incident and the opening of the trial).

Much to the amazement of some, the man who came forward to defend the side of the soldiers in the trial, was, too, one of the leaders in the patriot cause -- John Adams. So strongly did he feel the need for complete justice in the colonies, that he was willing to defend his enemies (who he believed to be innocent anyway), in order to see justice done.

Sam Adams, surprising his followers, did not resent his cousin's attitude, or his role as counsel for the defense. And even more, he expressed pleasure at the motives of John, in a public letter, published in the Boston Gazette[35] for all to see. However, he had no intention of joining sympathies with anyone connected with the innocence of the soldiers. It was far too great

an opportunity for him to surrender for any reason. In the Gazette he wrote of the trial:

> "...whatever may be the sentiments of men of the coolest minds abroad, concerning the issue of this trial, we are not to doubt, but the Court, the Jury, the Witnesses, and the Council on both sides, have consciously acquitted themselves: To be sure, no one in his senses will venture to affirm the contrary.
>
> "I am free to declare my opinion, that a cause of so great importance...ought to be fairly stated to the public; that we may from thence learn how far we are bound to submit to every band of soldiers we meet with in the streets, and in what instances we may venture to interpose and prevent their murdering those whom we may think to be innocent persons without being liable to be censured for acting unlawfully, if we escape with our lives, or charged with bringing our blood on our own heads, if we should fall victims to their rage and cruelty."[36]

A week later, Adams continued the discussion in the Gazette, recreating the turmoil and terror of the incident before the minds of his readers.

"To see eight prisoners brought to the bar together, charged with the murder of five persons at one time, was certainly...affecting: But whoever recollects the tragedy of that fatal evening, will I believe readily own that the scene then was much more affecting.

"...it is solemn as it brings to our minds the tribunal of GOD himself! before whose judgment-seat the scriptures assure us all must appear....

"This Kilroi's (one of the soldiers on trial) bayonet was proved to be the next morning bloody five inches from the point. It was said to be possible that this might be occasioned by the bayonet's falling into the human blood, which ran plentifully in the street, for one of their bayonets was seen to fall. It is possible, I own; but much more likely that this very bayonet was stabbed into the head of poor Gray after he was shot, and that this may account for its being bloody five inches from the point---Such an instance of Savage barbarity there undoubtedly was.... I shall continue the subject at my leisure."[37]

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A crushing blow to the hopes of Adams over the incident called the Massacre was the testimony of one of the participants -- a deathbed confession actually, in which the dying man totally disblamed the British soldiers for what had taken place. It was his statement which helped to exonerate the British, and place the blame upon the mob. He was Patrick Carr, who died of wounds received during the fracas.

Adams was enraged at this sudden turn of events just when, as he saw it, he had the British where he wanted them. He immediately sought to discredit Carr's testimony.

> "This unlooked-for recantation from one of the martyrs who was dying in the odor of sanctity with which Sam Adams had invested them sent a wave of alarm through the patriot ranks. But Adams blasted Carr's testimony in the eyes of all pious New Englanders by pointing out that he was an Irish 'papist' who had probably died in the confession of the Roman Catholic Church. After Sam Adams finished with Patrick Carr even Tories did not dare to quote him to prove Bostonians were responsible for the Massacre." [38]

This is what Adams wrote in the Boston Gazette about Carr's testimony:

> "Great stress was laid by some upon the simple declaration of this man, who in all probability died in the faith of a roman catholick.

> This however, I am apt to think, will not disparage his declaration in the opinion of some great men at home, even though he did make his confession to a ghostly physician...."[39]

After the massacre, Adams, representing the people, went to the-now Governor Hutchinson, and demanded that the troops be removed from the town. At first, Hutchinson refused, stating that he had no authority to order such a course of action. However, upon the insistence of Adams, he offered to remove one regiment. Adams countered by stating that if he had authority to remove one regiment, he could remove two. The regiments were removed!

In 1772, Adams brought before the town meeting on November 2, a resolution to form Committees of Correspondence, in order to unite the towns and villages of the province into a closely-knit group, for the purpose of creating a more powerful force of resistence.[40] According to his scheme, twenty-nine persons were to form the committee, and with this new and singularly powerful voice, the British would have to contend, much to their woe. However, Virginia, under the direction of Patrick Henry, outdid Massachusetts and Sam Adams in this regard by proposing that such Committees be organized for <u>all the colonies</u>, with a like purpose in mind. The clouds were

gathering on a horizon that few could see, but which were cheered in silent expectation by the provincial radicals with Sam Adams leading the way.

> "Samuel Adams was the leader and master spirit among this bold and efficient band of pioneers. He was henceforward a most able political writer...in the columns of every... paper in New England to which he could gain access, and over a great number of different signatures." 41

When the tax on tea was established as a lasting rule in colonial America, after most of the other taxes had been repealed, it caused no end of discontent amongst the potential taxpayers. Smuggling had been almost completely curtailed in Massachusetts, whereas Pennsylvania and other Crown colonies enjoyed the fruits of this illicit traffic - with no taxes to pay. However, for Bostonians, the only tea to be had was that which arrived on British merchant ships, with British revenue commissioners waiting with open purses. The colonists needed the tea, and they had but one place to buy it, and they disliked the manner in which taxes on such commodities were levied by the Parliament.

On December 16, 1773, Adams called a meeting of the townspeople. He was concerned with the presence in Boston Harbor of British ships carrying cargoes of taxable tea, and whether or not it would be landed. The crowds gathered

at "Old South" and Adams announced to them his plans to seek an audience with the governor. While he went off to see Hutchinson on the matter, the people stirred with excitement. But the governor refused to go along with Adams's scheme, and he returned to the meeting. When silence finally fell over the hall, Adams stood on the platform, and looked over the faces turned up to hear him. "This meeting can do nothing more to save the country," he stated.

With that came the Indian disguises,[42] the raid on the ships in the harbor, and, as a result of all this, the passage of the Boston Port Bill.

After the Port of Boston was closed in an attempt to force the province into paying for the loss of the tea cargo that had been dumped into the sea, the Virginia House of Burgesses openly sympathized with neighboring Boston. Because of their protests over the injustices of the British authorities in America, the Royal Governor of Virginia disbanded the House, forbidding that it should meet again. However, with the guidance of Patrick Henry, it met in a tavern, and issued the call which became the First Continental Congress. Representatives from each colony were asked to attend the conclave in Philadelphia in September, 1774.

At the Congress, to which he was one of the delegates from Massachusetts, Adams helped lead the fifty representatives in the drawing up of the historic Declaration of Rights and Grievances, which later was sent to London in an attempt to gain sympathy and support for the Colonial cause from that quarter.

About this time, several top-rung patriots began showing worry lines on anxious brows. They feared what this out-and-out defiance might lead to, and it was not beneath the dignity of staunch patriotism to fear for the safety of the country at the hands of the most powerful adversary in the world. Such notables as Benjamin Franklin and Josiah Quincy, both ardent patriots, suggested the possibility of the province paying the damages involved in the tea-party, and getting Boston "off the hook" in that manner. But Adams would have no part in such a scheme, and held fast to his position. He changed the minds of the hesitant members as well.

General Gage, who had become Military Governor of Massachusetts, replacing Governor Hutchinson, had Adams and Hancock proscribed, but felt that the time was not at hand to do anything about arresting the two. The times were much too stormy. However, Adams had to be on his guard constantly, for the least infraction might have resulted in his slamming behind him the door to a British

dungeon.

But these things did not bother Adams to any great extent. He openly urged the townspeople of Boston to set themselves about the task of manufacturing powder and balls, musket and cannon, and to train themselves in the ways of military warfare. He urged the adoption of a code for the maintenance of militiamen who would be called into action on a moment's notice. The very men Adams strove to bring together as the nucleus of America's first fighting force in the rebellion -- the Minute Men as they were called -- were the ones who answered his call. Along with such plans as this, Adams called together a meeting of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts which convened for the purpose of raising an army to oppose the formidable redcoat opposition which occupied greater Boston. This overt act proved to be too much for the patience of even such as General Gage, and ordered the arrest of Adams and Hancock immediately.

The two fugitives had left Boston for the Parker House in Lexington, just outside of the city. The British were dispatched to rout them from their beds, and bring them back, and to destroy any ammunition and arms they found along the way. But two stalwart colonials, William Dawes and Paul Revere sped on horseback ahead of the oncoming troops and alarmed the countryside.

There, on Lexington's Green, to the words of Major Pitcairn's "Disperse you rebels! Down with your arms and disperse!" flowed the first blood of the Revolution. Eight ragged colonial farmers died in that first engagement. The mighty army of Britain was bent upon arresting two men. The disorganized citizens of a country town said they would not take them, and they did not!

To the crack of musket fire in the distance, the escaping Adams stopped his old friend in a field near Winthrop, and joyously declared, "Oh what a glorious morning for America is this!" [43]

Even after the fighting had begun, and such memorable battles as Bunker Hill had been passed into history, some factions in America were willing to condone a doctrine of submission to England. During the meeting of the Second Continental Congress in July, 1775, the Quakers from Pennsylvania intoned such an appeal. But Adams sparked back with an argument that convinced all of the need for continued armed resistance.

> "Now we are called a pack of villainous rebels, who, like the St. Vincent Indians, can expect nothing more than a pardon for our lives, and the sovereign favor, respecting freedom and prosperity, to be at the king's will. Grant, Almighty God, that I may be numbered with the dead before that sable day dawns on North America." [44]

Finally, with all hope gone for a conciliation, the delegates, on July 4, 1775, adopted the Declaration of Independence, which set the country upon a course from which it has never parted.

> "Many men took their lives in their hands when the Declaration of Independence was signed, but Samuel Adams and John Hancock could not by any act have made their own condition worse." 45

For the duration of the Revolutionary War, Samuel Adams remained a member of Congress. In 1779, he helped prepare a State Constitution for Massachusetts. In 1787, he was a member of the Massachusetts Convention dealing with the ratification of the Federal Constitution. Although several features in this charter didn't appeal to him, Adams, at long last, agreed to its adoption. In 1788, he was defeated in his bid for a Congressional seat. He became Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts in 1789, with Hancock as Governor. He remained in this political capacity until the death of Hancock in 1794, when he became Governor of the Commonwealth. Three years later, at seventy-four years of age, he retired from public life.

Adams once remakred about himself:

> "It is often stated that I am at the head of the Revolution, whereas a few of us merely lead the way as the people follow, and we can go no further than we are backed up by them; for if we attempt to advance any furthur, we make no progress, and may lose our labor in defeat." 46

On Sunday morning, October 2, 1803, Samuel Adams died, after a lifetime of eighty-two exciting and fruitful years of devotion to the causes of his fellowman. He was buried at "Old Granary," off Tremont Street, in the heart of Boston.

> "Incessant devotion to the public service and entire consecration of every energy to the cause of his country had wrought upon him poverty and need." 47

FOOTNOTES

1. Unfortunately, Adams's Master's dissertation has been lost, and there is no record of its content.

2. Independent Advertiser, December 5, 1748

3. Boutwell, George S., Dawes, Henry L., and others, Remarks in the Senate of the United States, (Washington, D.C.: United States Senate, Dec. 19, 1876), p. 9

   I believe that Mr. Dawes, who addressed the Senate at this sitting in praise of Adams, directed his words at Adams's Independent Advertiser, rather than the Public Advertiser, for no record of a newspaper bearing that title can be found. However, the former was in circulation at the date mentioned in the address, and definitely performed the services expounded by Mr. Dawes. Therefore, it is to be assumed that Mr. Dawes named the paper erroneously.

4. Independent Advertiser, May 8, 1749

5. Old South Leaflets, vol. VIII, Letters of John Adams, (Boston: Directors of the Old South Work. Old South Meeting House. No. 179), p. 14

6. Harlow, Ralph V., Samuel Adams, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1923), p. 25

7. Mott, Frank L., American Journalism, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1947), p. 76

8. Bleyer, William G., Main Currents in the History of American Journalism, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1927), p. 81

9. Miller, John C., Origins of the American Revolution, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1943), p. 289

10. Miller, John C., Samuel Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1936), p. 37

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6. Herlow, Ralph V., Samuel Adams, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1923), p. 25.

7. Mott, Frank L., American Journalism, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1947), p. 76.

8. Sloyer, William G., Main Currents in the History of American Journalism, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1927), p. 81.

9. Miller, John C., Origins of the American Revolution, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1943), p. 259.

10. Miller, John C., Samuel Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1930), p. 37.

11. The Boston Gazette, April 4, 1768

12. Ibid., April 11, 1768

13. Bleyer, op. cit., p. 82

14. Ibid., p. 82

15. Miller, Sam Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, op. cit., p. 35

16. Miller, Origins of the American Revolution, op. cit., p. 292

17. The Boston Gazette, June 16, 1766

18. Boutwell, Dawes, and others, op. cit., p. 8

19. The Boston Gazette, September 23, 1765

20. Lodge, Henry C., Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty from Stepping Stones of American History, (Boston: W. A. Wildey Co., 1924), p. 243

21. Jones, Robert W., Journalism in the United States, (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1947), p. 128

22. The Boston Gazette, September 16, 1765

23. Ibid., October 12, 1767

24. Lodge, op. cit., p. 252

25. The Boston Gazette, October 10, 1768

26. Miller, Sam Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, op. cit., p. 166

27. The Boston Gazette, December 5, 1768

28. Ibid., December 12, 1768

29. Ibid., December 19, 1768

30. Ibid., September 19, 1768

31. Ibid., August 22, 1768

32. Ibid., May 11, 1767

33. Miller, Sam Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, op. cit., p. 53

34. Miller, Origins of the American Revolution, op. cit., p. 296

35. The Boston Gazette, January 7, 1771

36. Ibid., December 10, 1770

37. Ibid., December 17, 1770

38. Miller, Sam Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, op. cit., p. 189

39. The Boston Gazette, December 24, 1770

40. Ibid., October 19, 1772

41. Boutwell, Dawes and others, op. cit., p. 9

42. The Boston Gazette, January 10, 1774

43. Fallows, Samuel, Samuel Adams, (Milwaukee: H. G. Campbell Publishing Co., 1903), p. 65

44. Ibid., p. 73

45. Lodge, op. cit., p. 242

46. Miller, Sam Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, op. cit., p. 126

47. Boutwell, Dawes and others, op. cit., p. 12

33. Miller, Sam Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, op. cit., p. 53

34. Miller, Origins of the American Revolution, op. cit., p. 290

35. The Boston Gazette, January 7, 1771

36. Ibid., December 10, 1770

37. Ibid., December 17, 1770

38. Miller, Sam Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, op. cit., p. 189

39. The Boston Gazette, December 24, 1770

40. Ibid., October 15, 1772

41. Boutwell, Dawes and others, op. cit., p. 9

42. The Boston Gazette, January 10, 1774

43. Fallows, Samuel, Samuel Adams, (Milwaukee: H. G. Campbell Publishing Co., 1903), p. 65

44. Ibid., p. 73

45. Lodge, op. cit., p. 242

46. Miller, Sam Adams, Pioneer of Propaganda, op. cit., p. 126

47. Boutwell, Dawes and others, op. cit., p. 12

APPENDIX A

ADDITIONAL NEWS ASPECTS OF THE GAZETTE

While the publication of more generalized news in the Boston Gazette during this period had little to do with the drive for equality and ultimate independence which was the aim of its publishers, it will establish that this journal was more than just a sounding-board for radicalism. It was, essentially, a newspaper, and as such, attempted to be a well-rounded disseminator of news -- all news. With this idea in mind, the effectiveness of its publication was increased immeasurably. People who cared little, one way or another, for radicalism, read the Gazette for its news, and many more were influenced indirectly by the writings of the radicals as a result.

The Gazette, a tabloid journal, usually ran four pages per issue, each page nine inches wide, and fifteen

inches deep. Its three columns per page ran about two and three-quarter inches wide, and about fourteen inches deep, per column.

In the early part of the period studied in this dissertation, (1760 to 1775), much of the general news dealt with the offscourings of the French and Indian War. Aside from the war news itself, other offerings were plentiful. Listings of battle casualties were regularly featured, as were lists of naval and merchant vessels, and names of personnel, lost at sea. Reports on tides, weather and temperatures, the arrivals and sailings of ships, publication of lottery news, obituaries, and the like, were common features of the Gazette. The paper's datelines read from all parts of the colonies and from the principal cities of Europe. Most of these "bulletins" were received as letters, or were clipped from other newspapers, and published, as they are today, at the head of each story, with the name of the city and the date of the writing set off in type distinctive from the textual faces.

Just such a release was one taken from the New York Gazette of December 24, 1771. It brought to light a legal principle which dealt with the ethics of sound journalism, to be contested in courts for many years afterward, even to the present day.

> "From the New York Gazette: Dec. 24: Whoever is acquainted with the true end of government in general, and the essential principles of a free government in particular, must grant, that when a subject of the latter is charged with a crime against the state, or an offense against an individual member of it, the laws of justice forbid that any undue measures should be practiced, before his trial, to prejudice the public, or the judges, against the person accused."[1]

The article continued to further point out that Hugh Gaine's New York Mercury had violated such ethics by printing a biased story about a defendant scheduled to be tried in court.

As was established in another chapter, the Gazette was not without its share of sensationalism. Stories of crime and violence were often written up in horrid and blood-curdling detail. The following is a good indication of this "matter-of-fact" type of coverage. While on the front page of this issue, Sam Adams wielded hammer-like blows to adversaries over the Boston Massacre, the inside pages featured such as this:

> "Annapolis, Maryland: Dec. 6: About ten days ago, a horrid murder was committed about five miles this side Patapico-Ferry; a person who came from the back parts of Virginia with horses for sale, having indiscreetly mentioned at a public house that he had sold all his horses and had then the money by him...had that afternoon his throat cut, and about 160 l. in paper money, besides gold, taken from him. The person suspected of having committed the (act) is now in gaol in Baltimore Town, and on him was found a large sum of money; as also some of the wearing apparel of the deceased."[2]

The threat of sudden attack by hostile Indians was everywhere about the colonial settlements of the day, and readers searched the pages of their journals avidly to seek news about Indian activities along the frontiers. Indian fighting was common, and, unlike the usual war-time enemies which might confront them, the Indians, they felt, were barbaric savages without honor, who could never be trusted, and who might sweep down, scalping and dismembering settlers, without notice. In a story sent to the Gazette from New York, a combination of colonial-sensationalism, and an account of the Indian situation

made for interesting reading. The dateline was December 31, 1764.

> "A letter from Detroit, dated the 12th ult. says 'Yesterday some of the Indians belonging to this place, who had been out on a scout against the Shawanese, returned with the scalp of one of their Chief's wives: They were extremely well received here by Col. Campbell, our Commandant, who made them several presents, with which they seemed well contented.'"[3]

Another issue of the Gazette reported on the army engaged in Indian fighting along the Northwest Frontier.

> "We are informed, that by the strange conduct of some, Sir William Johnson will have infinite work to do with the Indians -- The distressed, strapling army are now crawling homeward -- Many left their carcasses in the woods, and along the Lake Side, a prey to the wolves and other vermin, through mere fatigue and want... (Other soldiers) are detained carrying some sick Indians (friendly Indians often aided in the fighting) on their backs through the woods."[4]

These constant skirmishes with the Indians, plus the threat from the French and Spanish, made it necessary for the Colonies to have on hand, hardy militia forces, ready to go into action whenever the occasion demanded. During the French and Indian War, the problem of recruiting soldiers for these units, now fighting in the western wilderness, became a major one. Provincial troops were invaluable to British commanders. The June 7, 1760 edition of the Boston Gazette carried a plea from Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson for volunteers.

> "By the Honorable Thomas Hutchinson, Lieutenant-Governor and Commander in Chief.
>
> The General Assembly having voted that every effective man who before the 20th instant, shall inlist into His Majesty's Service to complete the Five Thousand Men proposed to be raised, shall receive Three Pounds lawful money bounty, over and above the encouragement already granted."[5]

Vital sources of news for colonial publishers were the tales handed on to them by ship captains, and crew members, dealing with happenings on the high seas and in other parts of the world. Some told of harrowing escapes from marauding privateers,[6] tales from far-off lands, etc. A typical note of such was issued in the Gazette in 1760.

"Yesterday arrived here the ship Countess of Berkeley, Capt. Whitson in 38 days from the Land's-End to Sandy Hook; and by her we have advice that His Majesty's Ship Penguin was lately taken off of Oparte by two French frigates, and carried into Lisbon --"[7]

A "Letters to the Editor"column was run in the Gazette as a usual feature, and made up much of the general news content of the paper. At one time, a series of such letters appeared, having to do, in heated tones, with upholding the honor and good character of a certain Boston maiden.[8] Another letter reflected somewhat, the mores of the day regarding woman's place in society.

"Messieurs Printers,

Though it is unusual for our sex to appear in print, yet I doubt not I shall be excused seeing it is in behalf of economy, the reigning theme of the Times... Although there be many things that occur to my mind...I shall at this time only enter my humble proposal, that the long complained-of custom of giving fees to the nurses of lying in women should be laid aside, as being a needless expense; for it is now got to such an height,

> that many prudent ladies will not visit their lying in friends, because they are sure to be followed and cringed to by the nurse, till she has sponged a fee, and if it is not quite large as she expected, the visitor is sure to be made an object of ridicule.... And I doubt not, by what I can learn, that this practice will very shortly be as wholly laid aside as hoods and scarfs at funerals."[9]
>
> (signed) Rebeckah Housewife

As was evidenced in the above letter, this type of news-source often betrays colorful notes on the ways and manners of the period. Surely the signature, "Rebeckah Housewife," is not too far removed from our own modern journals, where writers to these columns employ such pseudonyms in order to cloak identities, while assaulting similarly unsavory conditions.

The idea that some colonial "social-reactionaries" saw fit to throw off certain of their customs, typically Puritan for so long, astonished the majority of pious citizens. A notice published in the Gazette in 1765 reflects something of a change.

> New York, Dec. 31: A gentleman in this city whose only son was interred last night, appeared at the

> funeral without any other mourning than a hat band, and the Bearers without scarfs."[10]

Another "Letter to the Editor" deals with certain taxes, in vogue at the time, and how such taxes resulted in heavy and profitable enterprise for some, through smuggling.

> "If the French have no hand in making our laws, they have great benefit by some of them. If the duty on rum was only 2s. 6d. per gallon, who would drink French brandy or risk smuggling it. We run into the same extremes as to dress; so that there is scarce any distinction between persons of great fortune, and people of ordinary rank."[11]

News from London was always in demand. The colonists who hadn't migrated from England, usually had close relatives who lived there, or, at least had heard and read enough about the place to have a keen interest in whatever happened there. The news received from the capitol of the English-speaking world was as numerous as it was varied. News of common people and their plights, joys or successes, plus notes on oddity, seemed to take precedence over other types. One such extract was

published in the Gazette, possibly encouraging a few polite chuckles on the part of the reader.

> "London, Nov. 10: Last week a poor boy was stopped by a highwayman on Hadley Common; the boy said he had but a halfpenny in his pocket, but that a young man, his fellow servant, was about a mile behind him with some meat in a bag, and under the meat he might find what he wanted: the highwayman rode off and stopped the young fellow; when, after tumbling the meat out of the bag into the road, he found at the bottom two halters."[12]

The following account was published in an early edition of the Gazette, and doubtless raised a colonial eyebrow or two:

> "London, Oct. 9: We are informed from Andover in Hampshire, that last week there was an extra-ordinary marriage consummated between a boy of 15 years old, an apprentice to a barber, and a girl of 9 years and a quarter. The latter...was under care of four guardians, three of which intended her for their own sons or relations (the girl, an orphan, had been left with a

fortune of 2000 l., by her late father), when she was marriageable; but one of them having a suspicion of the others design, sent for her home from school on Monday...and married her to his son, the lad above-mentioned."[13]

Features run in the Gazette included poetry, literary extracts, satirical or burlesque playlets written by contributors, humorous verse, and the like. It seemed to be in demand, since much of it appeared on Page One, before the troubled days of the resistance crowded general news out. But even then, much of this type was to be had. Epitaph Found in a Country Church Yard, the final eulogy to a late female-potter, was published just as general disorder showed its head in the colonies, and doubtless amused, and even shocked many of the staid Puritans.

Beneath this stone lies Katharine Gray,
Changed from a busy life to lifeless clay:
By earth and clay she got her pelf,
And now she's turned to clay herself,
Abate your grief and dry your tears
Who knows but in a run of years,
In some pitcher or broad pan,
She in her shop may be again.[14]

Upon considering the varied items offered here as representative items of the Boston Gazette, we may establish that the reader received excellent over-all coverage.

The newspaper, before the pre-Revolutionary era had been officially ushered in, laid out its paper, in general, as follows: (Taken from the January 21, 1760 edition of the Gazette.)

One and one-half columns were devoted to the observations of the editor, while two and one-half were given over to poetry. (One issue devoted an entire page to lottery results.[15]) In addition to these, two columns were allotted for satirical drama, and a single, front page column for a listing of ships lost in action against the French. Of the twelve column-total, five were given over to advertising of all types, including legal and what the modern press might consider to be, classified advertising. Colonial journalists, too, depended greatly upon the rewards of advertising for much of their revenue.

Very often, with an overflow of available copy, the Gazette would run a supplementary sheet, which was inserted between the pages of the main paper. This supplement was made up of two columns, with additional printing run sideways on the margins, when the situation demanded. This, was the Boston Gazette !

FOOTNOTES

1. The Boston Gazette, Jan. 7, 1771
2. Ibid., (supplement)
3. Ibid., Jan. 14, 1765
4. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1765
5. Ibid., June 7, 1760
6. Ibid., Jan. 21, 1765
7. Ibid., June 7, 1760
8. Ibid., Jan. 31, 1774
9. Ibid., Jan. 21, 1765
10. Ibid., Jan. 14, 1765
11. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1765
12. Ibid., Feb. 4, 1765
13. Ibid., Jan. 5, 1730
14. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1765
15. Ibid.

1. The Boston Gazette, Jan. 7, 1771
2. Ibid., (supplement)
3. Ibid., Jan. 14, 1765
4. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1765
5. Ibid., June 7, 1760
6. Ibid., Jan. 21, 1765
7. Ibid., June 7, 1760
8. Ibid., Jan. 31, 1774
9. Ibid., Jan. 21, 1765
10. Ibid., Jan. 14, 1765
11. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1765
12. Ibid., Feb. 4, 1765
13. Ibid., Jan. 5, 1730
14. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1765
15. Ibid.

APPENDIX B

ADVERTISING IN THE GAZETTE

As a general rule, more than one-third of the total space in the Boston Gazette was devoted to advertising. It embraced ads, notices, and announcements of all kinds, from "wet-nurses" to cannon balls, and from bees wax to feathers. Very often, of the twelve column total in a single edition, five would be devoted to this means of bringing additional revenue to the printer.

A portion of the advertising reflects the sundry fears and the gullibility of the period, e.g. cure-all potions, etc., and how it exploited to the fullest the child-like fancies and superstitions of the public. Most colonial advertising, however, was endorsed by sound, legitimate businessmen, who concerned themselves only with getting cash customers into their shops. From the heavy schedule of advertising in all issues of the Gazette,

including the stormy days just prior to the Revolution, it can be said that, financially, advertising was well worth the efforts of the printer, and the expense of the advertiser.

Some business houses advertised in every issue, and over a long period of time, seldom changing the makeup of their ads to any appreciable extent. Those placed by Boston merchant, Benjamin Church, were of this class, indicating that the cost of running the ads over many years must have borne fruit.

Others featured store nameplates in bold face, with decorative borders, or simple italics, to distinguish them from other ads. With the exception of a lack of elaborate art work, and the very subjects involved, colonial advertising was not too far afield from present-day newspaper advertising.

A local haberdasher of the day ran the following advertisement for the benefit of veterans of the French and Indian War. It coincides with similar sales talks given during recent years.

"Daniel Jones at the Hat and Helmet, South End, Boston, Notifies the Officers and Soldiers belonging to this province who have been lately discharged, that he will supply them with all

> sorts of ENGLISH GOODS suitable for the season, which are just imported, and to be sold at the lowest rate. The soldiers may be credited till their Muster Rools are made up, provided they are recommended by their officers, or other such persons as may be depended."[1]

Bostonians, even in that age, placed great value on the gift of reading and writing, and to them, it was a gift. Many took advantage of existing opportunities to take lessons from teachers who held classes at odd hours. The feature of night sessions interested the working members of families, and others who would be otherwise restricted for time during the day.

> "John Griffin -- Intends to begin Evening School at 6 o'clock this evening at his school in Hanover Street, a little Northward of Concert Hall, to teach Writing and Arithmetic."[2]

Advertisers who became aware of this yearning to conquer the binding stagnation of illiteracy on the part of the public, advertised in the Gazette, any pamphlet, book, or the like which they felt would be of interest to potential readers.

"Lately Published -- A dissertation on the GOUT, and all chronic diseases jointly considered."[3]

"THIS DAY PUBLISHED...The Life and Heroic Actions of Frederick III, King of Prussia.... (The Second Edition), Published for the entertainment and Improvement of the British Youth of both sexes."[4]

Many magazines, available to readers of the day, went the round of newspapers, as did books and other reading matter, in an effort to gain additional subscribers. Such was --

"The young Missus Magazine, 2 v. 12 mo. containing dialogues between a governess and several young ladies. In which each lady is made to speak according to her particular genius, temper and inclination.

A short and clear abridgment is also given of sacred and profane history; and some lessons in geography. The useful is blended throughout with the agreeable. The whole being interspersed with proper reflections and moral tales."[5]

The more "classified" types of advertising covered a myriad of topics, including those placed by shop owners, selling imported cloth of all kinds, weights, and shades, new business announcements, old firms moved to new addresses, "Help Wanted" ads, those sent by families requesting wet-nurses to come into their homes for duty, others by wet-nurses seeking positions, real estate for sale and rent, and the like.

The advertisement placed by the Green Dragon Tavern, a meeting place for Sam Adams and his radical group, is interesting in that it encourages "secret meetings" of this blend.

> "...where gentlemen may depend upon meeting with the best entertainment and attendance -- The rooms are very commodious for public or private meetings... There are also several smaller rooms, well calculated for private societies..." 6

Notices announcing the sale of Negro slaves were commonly run in the Gazette. Such advertisements usually included height and weight of the man (or woman) to be sold, whether or not he could read and/or write, and the duties he was best capable of executing. Similar ads were run concerning indentured whites.

If and when a slave ran away, a notice to that effect might be published as was the following:

> "Last Monday Night Runaway -- from his master, a Negro man named Immanuel. He carried with him a saw and an ax, three shirts, a striped jacket. Whoever shall take up said Negro, and bring him to his master, shall have TWO DOLLARS reward, and all necessary charges paid by Richard Walker."[7]

A typical "Situation Wanted" ad read:

> "WANTS A PLACE IN THE CAPACITY of a clerk, a young man aged 26 years. He understands the method of Book-keeping, and writes an undeniable hand; would have no objection to an attorney's office, (as he can engross the Law hands very expeditiously)...."[8]

Remedies and healing potions of all types were advertised regularly in the Gazette. Medical Science being in complete infancy, especially amongst the superstitious and fearful Puritans, anyone with a "different" remedy faced the prospect of making money.

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A typical "Situation Wanted" ad read:

"WANTS A PLACE IN THE COUNTRY of a clerk, a young man aged 26 years. He understands the method of Book-keeping, and writes an undeniable hand; would have no objection to an attorney's office, (as he can express the Law hands very expeditiously)...."[8]

Homeless and beating potions of all types were advertised regularly in the Gazette. Medical Science being in complete infancy, especially among the superstitious and fearful Puritans, anyone with a "different" remedy faced the prospect of making money.

"Jacob Hemet, Dentist to Her Majesty, and the Princess Ameia begs leave to recommend to the public his newly discovered Essence of Pearl, and Pearl Dentifrice, which he has found to be greatly superior..., to anything hitherto made use of for complaints of the Teeth and Gums: Particularly, they will preserve the Teeth in a perfect sound state, even to old age; they render them white and beautiful without in the least impairing the enamel: fasten such as are loose, keep such as are already decayed, from becoming worse, prevent the Tooth-Ache, perfectly cure the Scurvy in the Gums...; they likewise render the breath delicate, sweet and remedy almost all those disorders that are the consequence of scorbutic gums."[9]

As the days passed toward the outbreak of the Revolution, advertisements offering all types of weapons for sale, came into prominence. The weapons made available by these ads were not the conventional type used against Indians, but, seemingly at least, were intended for more formidable opponents.

"A neat assortment of guns, complete with bayonets, steel rods and swivels...."[10]

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"A neat assortment of Guns, complete with bayonets, steel rods and swivels...."[10]

And one placed by an iron manufacturer:

"Choice Philadelphia Bar-Iron -- English and German Steel, Powder, Shot, and Sheet Leads, Nails, Brads, and Tacks of all sorts, with most kinds of Ironmongery, Cutlery, braziery and Pewter Wares, to be sold cheap for cash."[11]

Other more general ads which were probably read with as much interest by non-buyers as some of the Gazette's news, might include the following:

A lecture notice on the wonders of electricity.[12]

"Went adrift about two months ago, the keel of a Bay Craft, about forty foot long. Any person that will bring it to Thomas Hitchbourn, Boat-Builder in Boston, within ten days, shall receive Two Dollars Reward."[13]

"Taken from Scott and Gill's Shop in Boston, through mistake, an anvil of 100 weight with a horn on the end.... Whoever hath taken, or is knowing of said anvil, and will send word to the Printers hereof...., shall have TWO DOLLARS Reward, and all necessary charges paid by JACOB TYLER."[14]

"Any person who will bring or send any quantity of Bees-Wax to Mr. Hancock's Store, by Wednesday evening next, may have a good price for the same."[15]

"A young woman of good character is wanted to go with a lady to the West Indies -- Handsome wages will be given."[16]

"WANTED -- A quantity of damaged feathers -- Also an old one horse cart."[17]

Another type of advertising that was very common in the Gazette was that announcing the liquidation of estates, notifying all creditors to go to prearranged sites to collect their just dues.

Colonial newspaper advertising served well the needs of the times, and rounded out the over-all usefulness to the public, of the colonial journal.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Boston Gazette, Jan. 21, 1760
2. Ibid., Oct. 12, 1772
3. Ibid., Nov. 2, 1772
4. Ibid., Feb. 18, 1760
5. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1771
6. Ibid., June 17, 1771
7. Ibid., Aug. 3, 1772
8. Ibid., Oct. 7, 1771
9. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1771
10. Ibid., Jan. 17, 1774
11. Ibid., Jan. 14, 1765
12. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1765
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., March 3, 1760
15. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1771
16. Ibid., Jan. 17, 1774
17. Ibid.

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12. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1765
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., March 3, 1760
15. Ibid., Jan. 7, 1771
16. Ibid., Jan. 17, 1774
17. Ibid.

CONCLUSION

The unification of adherents to a popular ideal became, up to the outbreak of the American Revolution, the purpose for the Gazette's existence. The spirit that coursed through the body of this journal was enlivened by Samuel Adams and his radical colleagues with but one thought in mind--to bring to bay the overpowering might of British authority in North America. With the first shots of the Rebellion fired at Lexington in 1775, the mission of the Boston Gazette and its zealous publishers had been completed.

The popular discontent of the day had been the stepping-off point, and through the editorials he wrote for it, Adams raised the Gazette to its greatest heights. The paper attained the record-breaking circulation of two thousand-- all ardent readers who sought the leadership of Adams and his journal to

unite the popular hostility of which they were so much a part, and it was to the success of this unity that the Gazette had been dedicated.

American journalism, through the efforts of this paper, had been promoted from"mere disseminator of public gossip" to vociferous instigator, promoter and defender of public opinion. The struggle for expression in Colonial America had been a long one, with few appreciable results before this period. Now, however, it would never again be relegated to a minor role in the formation and function of government. It was to be a part of government, as it has been ever since.

Samuel Adams gripped the Town of Boston, and shrieked and exhorted his rantings for freedom and unalienable rights, until that town became the leader in rebellion. Boston led the Colonies, Adams led Boston, and this he did by communicating to others -- by instilling in the minds of aroused citizens the principles which brought about the dismemberment of an empire. As his mass media, Adams made use of any source available, but none served him so well, in the eyes of his contemporaries, as did the Boston Gazette. Nowhere in Boston was there a paper so willing to air such dangerous grievances against so powerful an adversary. Nowhere were there two publishers who

worked so diligently to give vent to ideas and nurture a political philosophy that promised them so little in return. Often, Edes and Gill were saved from imprisonment and death, only by the healthy respect which their opponents had for the ideals upheld in the sedition they printed.

After the outbreak of hostilities Adams moved on to greater conquests in the political arena. His propagandizing, for the most part, was over. He had succeeded in his mission. But the Gazette no longer found the need to propagate the tenets of the powerful cause that had given it its reason for existence. The cause had vanished. There was a new cause -- war -- and the Gazette was to have no part in it.

As soon as Adams withdrew his stinging pen from the backshop on Court Street, the Gazette prepared for its own passing. Its circulation dropped off gradually, until, in 1803, it no longer existed. Adams had given it its life when need had demanded it, and he marked its death as well when need had passed.

The Gazette had served Adams and his cause well. It had brought to the fore the air of contumacy that was to seize the entire country and unify the grumblings of the Colonial world. Adams had raised the Gazette just as the Gazette had raised Adams. Together the two

made Boston the "Hotbed of Sedition" which openly defied the crown of Britain, and led to the outbreak of the war for American independence.

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